



## Statement by the Music Education Policy Roundtable On Laconia School District Music Cuts

The Laconia School District of New Hampshire has recently approved its 2016-2017 school year budget plan, which includes a significant budget cut of \$1.7 million that threatens music education for students in the district of all ages. Based on projected enrollment in current offerings, the cuts could be felt by 43 enrolled band students, 10 jazz band students, 53 chorus students, 23 concert choir students, 12 for guitar students, and 12 for music appreciation students. In addition, elementary and high school band programs are being cut to after school programs and high school chorus programs are being reduced to a one-semester class. In total, 153 music students could be affected by the cuts, approximately 25 percent of the high school population.

It is the Music Education Policy Roundtable's continued vision that more resources should be made available to provide all students, regardless of personal circumstance or background, the access to a broad curriculum that includes a dedicated, rich experience with music. Our vision is reflected in current federal priorities in the "Every Student Succeeds Act" (ESSA), a historic piece of legislation that replaces "No Child Left Behind," and also includes "music" as part of a "Well-Rounded Education." This major overhaul of federal education policy provides an enormous step forward for music education, focusing on what makes a student whole, and nurturing the skills and assets that are critical to their future success within the 21st century. With music's strengthened federal status, we have the opportunity to ensure every child has access to a broad and rich curriculum and the ability to become well-rounded students.

The Roundtable encourages the Laconia School District to reflect current federal education priorities and allocate future resources to provide a "Well-Rounded" curriculum, which includes comprehensive and sequential-based school music programs. Furthermore, we strongly encourage the district to offer instruction for these programs during the regular school day. Music programs are highly valuable in engaging students (in particular at-risk students) by improving their overall participation and attendance rates, and correlate with better grades across all subject matters. By removing these courses from

regular instructional hours, Laconia students risk losing these benefits at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. The Roundtable strongly encourages all teachers and supporters of the music and arts community to help the School Board recognize the benefits of music education for students. We welcome the opportunity to engage in further dialogue with the Laconia School District regarding this important matter.

Sincerely,

**The Music Education Policy Roundtable**

**National Association for Music Education  
American String Teachers Association  
American Choral Directors Association  
American Orff-Schulwerk Association  
American School Band Directors Association  
Barbershop Harmony Society  
Chorus America  
College Band Directors National Association  
Conn Selmer  
Drum Corps International  
Education Through Music  
El Sistema USA  
The Gordon Institute for Music Learning  
GRAMMY Foundation  
Guitar and Accessories Marketing Association, Inc.  
Jazz at Lincoln Center  
J.W. Pepper & Son, Inc.  
League of American Orchestras**

**Little Kids Rock  
Music for All  
Music Teachers National Association  
Music Publishers Association  
Music Sales Group/MusicFirst  
National Association of Music Merchants  
National Association of Music Parents  
National Music Council  
Organization of American Kodály Educators  
Percussive Arts Society  
Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia  
Progressive Music  
Quadrant Arts Education Research  
The Recording Academy  
Strathmore Hall Foundation  
VH1 Save The Music Foundation  
Winter Guard International**